(ii) Banks have agreed to enhance the composite loan limit from Rs. 25 lakhs to Rs. 50 lakhs for the SSIs.

(iii) Ministry of SSI has identified 60 clusters for focused development of SSIs. The list of 60 clusters was sent by the Ministry of SSI to the RBI. RBI in turn has written to the commercial banks to formulate credit plans by incorporating the credit requirements of the SSI units in the State Credit Plans.

Increase in software export

*163. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the outbreak of SARS in the recent past and the slump in economy in South East Asian Countries has resulted in increase in software export to the West;

(b) if so, by what percentage;

(c) the steps Government propose to take to help keep the upward trend in these exports; and

(d) if the answer to part (a) be in the negative, the reasons for which Indian software exporters were not able to capitalize on this opportunity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The main elements of the strategy for sustaining the growth of Software Exports are as follows:-

(i) Full exemption of the software and software services sector from licensing requirements.

(ii) 100% exemption from payment of duties for software exports.

(iii) 100% exemption from payment of income tax on profits from software exports upto the year 2010.

(iv) Establishment of 39 centres throughout country by the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) Society to provide single window clearance, satellite transmission facilities and escorts services to Software Exports.

(v) Securing full market access and national treatment to Indian Software Industry in the on-going negotiations on General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

(vi) support to R&D projects to enable the software industry to move up the value chain and increase the exports of high-end software.

(d) The outbreak of SARS did not have any significant impact on Indian Software exports, as it was a temporary and short term phenomenon. It is not feasible to divert project of Software Development and services to other locations in such a short time. However, the Indian Software and Services exports have been showing a consistent increase.

Manual telephone exchanges of Jharkhand

†*164. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to convert the manual telephone exchanges of Jharkhand into electronic ones;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir. All telephone exchanges in Jharkhand are automatic electronic exchanges.

(b) and (c) Not applicable in view of (a) above.

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.